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United States Department of Agriculture,

DIVISION OF PUBLICATIONS,

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THE COTTON PLANT.

The 433-page bulletin on the Cotton Plant, its History, Botany, Chemistry, Culture, Enemies, and Uses, just issued by the Department of Agriculture, is probably the largest publication devoted to a single branch of agricultural industry ever issued by the Department. Cotton, as stated by Assistant Secretary Dabney in an introductory chapter devoted largely to the economics of the subject, is the principal product of eight great States and the most valuable money crop of the entire country. While it furnishes the raw material for one of our most important manufacturing industries, it constitutes at the same time from one-fourth to one-third of our total exports. In view of such considerations this treatise has been prepared by the experts of the Department, with the collaboration of various specialists connected with the agricultural colleges and experiment stations of the South, and of a practical planter (Maj. Harry Hammond, of South Carolina), whose valuable contributions to the literature of cotton production long ago brought him into prominence. These different writers discuss the subject, each from his own scientific or practical standpoint. The purpose of the bulletin is stated by Dr. A. C. True, Director of the Office of Experiment Stations, under whose supervision it has been compiled, to be the presentation of such facts as would be useful to students of agriculture, to investigators at the experiment stations, and to that increasing body of intelligent agriculturists who are interested in thoroughly acquainting themselves with the past and present condition of our agricultural industries, with a view to discovering means for their improvement; and the researches of the chemist, the climatologist, the botanist, the entomologist, and other investigators are all made contributory to this important end.

The chapter on the botany of cotton, by Dr. Walter H. Evans, is concerned chiefly with the structure and varieties of the plant. Mr. J. B. McBryde, of Tennessee, and Mr. W. H. Beal, of the Department, joint authors of the chapter on the chemistry of cotton, discuss the composition of the plant and the demands it makes upon the soil. Prof. Milton Whitney treats of climatology and soils, using weather tables and soil analyses in explanation of the conditions most favorable to cultivation. President H. C. White, of the Georgia State College, discusses the manuring of cotton, stating the conclusions drawn from numerous experiments. Prof. S. M. Tracy, of Mississippi, contributes a description of the principal cultivated varieties of the cotton plant, with their origin, distribution, and relative values. The diseases of cotton are discussed by Prof. G. F. Atkinson, of Cornell, and the insects which affect the cotton plant by Dr. L. O. Howard, the Department entomologist. The feeding value of cotton-seed products forms the subject of an important chapter by Mr. B. W. Kilgore, of North Carolina, while 88 pages are devoted to a discussion of the culture, handling, and uses of cotton by Major Harry Hammond. Mr. R. B. Handy furnishes a chapter on the history and statistics of the industry. Most of these articles are illustrated. The volume includes a bibliography.

The publication is not available for general distribution, as the law limits the edition to a thousand copies, but the Superintendent of Documents, Union Building, Washington, D. C., can supply a limited number of copies at 35 cents each, and "separates" of most of the articles will shortly be issued by the Department for miscellaneous distribution. It is, however, within the province of Congress to order a larger edition of the complete work, but no steps to this end have been taken as yet.

